

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A method for combating spam comprising:  
classifying a message at least partially by evaluating at least one message parameter, using at least one variable criterion, thereby providing a spam classification; and  
handling said message based on said spam classification.
2. (Original) A method for combating spam according to claim 1 and wherein said at least one variable criterion comprises a criterion which changes over time.
3. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 1 or ~~claim 2~~ and wherein said at least one variable criterion comprises a parameter template-defined function.
4. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to ~~claim 1 any of claims 1–3~~ and wherein said classifying comprises:  
said using at least one variable criterion at at least one gateway; and  
said providing spam classifications at at least one server, receiving evaluation outputs from said at least one gateway and providing said spam classifications to said at least one gateway.
5. (Original) A method for combating spam according to claim 4 and wherein said classifying also comprises:  
encrypting at least part of said evaluation outputs by employing a non-reversible encryption so as to generate encrypted information; and  
transmitting at least said encrypted information to said at least one server.
6. (Original) A method for combating spam according to claim 5 and wherein said transmitting comprises transmitting information of a length limited to a predefined threshold.

7. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 1 any of  
~~claims 1–6~~ and wherein said handling comprises at least one of:

forwarding said message to an addressee of said message;  
storing said message in a predefined storage area;  
deleting said message;  
rejecting said message;  
sending said message to an originator of said message; and  
delaying said message for a period of time and thereafter re-classifying  
said message.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 1 any of  
~~claims 1–7~~ and wherein said message comprises at least one of:

an e-mail;  
a network packet;  
a digital telecom message; and  
an instant messaging message.

9. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 1 any of  
~~claims 1–8~~ and wherein said classifying also comprises at least one of:

requesting feedback from an addressee of said message;  
evaluating compliance of said message with a predefined policy;  
evaluating registration status of at least one registered address in said  
message;  
analyzing a match among network references in said message;  
analyzing a match between at least one translatable address in said  
message and at least one other network reference in said message;  
at least partially actuating an unsubscribe feature in said message;  
analyzing an unsubscribe feature in said message;  
employing a variable criteria;  
sending information to a server and receiving classification data based on  
said information;  
employing classification data received from a server; and

employing stored classification data.

10. (Original) A method for combating spam comprising:
  - classifying messages at least partially by evaluating at least one message parameter of multiple messages, by employing at least one evaluation criterion which changes over time, thereby providing spam classifications; and
  - handling said messages based on said spam classifications.
11. (Original) A method for combating spam according to claim 10 and wherein said classifying is at least partially responsive to similarities between plural messages among said multiple messages, which similarities are reflected in said at least one message parameter.
12. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 10 or claim 11 and wherein said classifying is at least partially responsive to similarities between plural messages among said multiple messages, which similarities are reflected in outputs of applying said at least one evaluation criterion to said at least one message parameter.
13. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 10 any of claims 10—12 and wherein said classifying is at least partially responsive to similarities in multiple outputs of applying a single evaluation criterion to said at least one message parameter in multiple messages.
14. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 10 any of claims 10—13 and wherein said classifying is at least partially responsive to the extent of similarities between plural messages among said multiple messages which similarities are reflected in said at least one message parameter.
15. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 10 any of claims 10—14 and wherein said classifying is at least partially responsive to the extent of similarities between plural messages among said multiple messages which

similarities are reflected in outputs of applying said at least one evaluation criterion to said at least one message parameter.

16. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 10 any of claims 10 – 15 and wherein said classifying is at least partially responsive to the extent of similarities in multiple outputs of applying a single evaluation criterion to said at least one message parameter in multiple messages.

17. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 14 any of claims 14 – 16 and wherein said extent of similarities comprises a count of messages among said multiple messages which are similar.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for combating spam according to claim 10 any of claims 10 – 17 and wherein said classifying is at least partially responsive to similarities in outputs of applying evaluation criteria to said at least one message parameter in multiple messages, wherein a plurality of different evaluation criteria are individually applied to said at least one message parameter in said multiple messages, yielding a corresponding plurality of outputs indicating a corresponding plurality of similarities among said multiple messages.

19. (Original) A method according to claim 18 and wherein said classifying also comprises aggregating individual similarities among said plurality of similarities.

20. (Original) A method according to claim 19 and wherein said aggregating individual similarities among said plurality of similarities comprises applying weights to said individual similarities.

21-186. (Cancelled)